

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BENCH-BAR-MEDIA CONFERENCE

A meeting of the Bench-Bar-Media Conference was held on Wednesday, July 10, 2002 in the Supreme Court Conference Room in Wilmington. The meeting was open to the public. Notice of the meeting had been posted. The members of the Conference in attendance were:

Members from the Electronic News Media

Allen Loudell
Chris Carl
Marie Krips
Johnnie Braxton

Members from the Print News Media

Rita Farrell (by telephone)

Members from the Bench

Chief Justice E. Norman Veasey
Vice-Chancellor Jack B. Jacobs
President Judge Henry duPont Ridgely
Judge John K. Welch

Members from the Bar

Richard D. Kirk, Esquire
Kathleen Jennings-Hostetter, Esquire
Don C. Brown, Esquire

The first agenda item was the approval of the draft minutes from the April 16, 2002 meeting of the Conference. Upon motion which was duly seconded, the minutes were unanimously approved without amendment.

President Judge Ridgely reported that both student winners in the high school essay contest had completed their internships. He noted that the American Bar Association will publish the winning essays in an upcoming newsletter. Judge Ridgely expressed his hope that more downstate schools will participate next year.

The next agenda item was the proposed new Administrative Directive/Rule for Expanded Media Coverage in Trial Courts. The Conference discussed the options available which included approval of the Administrative Directive with submission to the Supreme Court; disapproval of the Administrative Directive; or to not address the Administrative Directive. Chief Justice Veasey indicated that the Supreme Court will meet in an administrative meeting on August 6, 2002 in Dover. After discussion, the Conference voted to resubmit the Administrative Directive to the Supreme Court with a

cover letter from President Judge Ridgely along with accompanying pertinent information for discussion at the August 6th Supreme Court administrative meeting. Chris Carl made the motion to resubmit and it was duly seconded. The majority of the Conference voted for the motion. Voting against the motion was Rita Farrell. Chief Justice Veasey abstained from the vote.

The Conference then discussed the proposed dinner with accompanying panel discussion. Several high profile speakers were recommended to the subcommittee consisting of President Judge Ridgely, Rita Farrell, Kathy Jennings-Hostetter, and Dick Kirk. The date of December 4, 2002 was selected. The dinner will be held at 6 p.m. at the Wyndham Hotel, Wilmington with the next meeting of the Conference held prior to the dinner at 4:30 p.m. The exact location of the meeting room at the Wyndham will be sent later. It was recommended that the panel discussion focus on "Professionalism in High Profile Cases". The panel will include members from the bench, the bar, and the media. Judge Ridgely requested that members of the conference assist in seeking funding to underwrite the costs of the speakers. The Conference will charge \$35 per person which will include dinner and the panel discussion. An application for continuing legal education credit will be submitted to the Commission on Continuing Legal Education by Franny Haney of the Administrative Office of the Courts. The staffing of the dinner and program will be handled by Franny.

Under new business, Rita Farrell made a motion to request the Superior Court to redo an administrative directive to allow the public to fill out a less restrictive form to obtain information. President Judge Ridgely asked that this motion be deferred to the next meeting of the Conference on December 4th and that Rita submit the form to Steve Taylor for distribution.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2 p.m.